

## CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of rendering a graphical component of a web page on the display of a computer, the computer having an appearance manager adapted to render a graphical component upon receiving a request for the graphical component, comprising:
  - requesting, by the web page, a graphical component to be rendered on the display;
  - determining whether a defined theme META tag is present in the web page; and
  - routing the rendering request for the graphical component to the appearance manager if the theme META tag is present, wherein the appearance manager assigns themed appearance characteristics to the graphical component and renders the graphical component on the display.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the graphical component being requested and rendered is a control.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the theme META tag can be set to indicate whether a themed appearance is desired, and wherein the rendering request is routed to the appearance manager if the theme META tag is set to indicate a themed appearance is desired.
4. The method of claim 3, further comprising:
  - determining, if the theme META tag is set to indicate a themed appearance is desired, whether the web page has specified cascading style sheet properties;

if cascading style sheet properties are specified, determining whether the specified properties are one of a number of predetermined properties desired to be ignored; and applying only those cascading style sheet properties that are not one of the predetermined properties to be ignored.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising rendering the requested control utilizing a standard look that is not themed by the appearance manager if the theme META tag is not present.

6. The method of claim 4, further comprising rendering the requested control utilizing a standard look that is not themed by the appearance manager if the theme META tag is set to indicate that a themed appearance is not desired.

7. A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 1.

8. A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating environment, the computer system operable to perform the steps recited in claim 1.

9. A method of requesting a rendered graphical component for a web page on the display of a computer, having an appearance manager adapted to render a graphical component according to a defined themed appearance upon receiving a request for the graphical component, comprising: requesting, by the web page, a graphical component to be rendered on the display; and

utilizing, by the web page, a defined theme META tag,

wherein the defined theme META tag routes the rendering request for the graphical component to the appearance manager, and wherein the appearance manager assigns themed appearance characteristics to the graphical component and renders the graphical component on the display.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the graphical component being requested and rendered is a control.

11. A method of rendering a graphical component of a web page on the display of a computer, the web page being hosted by an application, the computer having an appearance manager adapted to render a graphical component upon receiving a request for the graphical component, comprising:

- instantiating, by the application, a web page;
- requesting, by the web page, a graphical component to be rendered on the display;
- determining whether a defined theming flag is set by the application; and
- routing the rendering request for the graphical component to the appearance manager if the theming flag is present, wherein the appearance manager assigns themed appearance characteristics to the graphical component and renders the graphical component on the display.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the requested control being requested and rendered is a control.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising:

if the theming flag is not set by the application, determining whether a defined theme META tag is present in the web page; and  
routing the rendering request for the control to the appearance manager if the theme META tag is present, wherein the appearance manager assigns themed appearance characteristics to the graphical control and renders the control on the display.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising:

determining whether the web page has specified cascading style sheet properties;  
if cascading style sheet properties are specified, determining whether the specified properties are one of a number of predetermined properties desired to be ignored;  
and  
applying only those cascading style sheet properties that are not one of the predetermined properties to be ignored.

15. The method of claim 14, further comprising rendering the requested control utilizing a standard look that is not themed by the appearance manager if the theme META tag is not present.

16. The method of claim 12, further comprising:

if the theming flag is set by the application, determining whether a defined theme META tag is present in the web page and set to indicate that a themed appearance is desired; and  
routing the rendering request for the control to the appearance manager if the theme META tag is present and set to indicate that a themed appearance is desired or if the theme

META tag is not present, wherein the appearance manager assigns themed appearance characteristics to the graphical control and renders the control on the display.

17. The method of claim 12, further comprising:

A2 if the theming flag is set by the application, determining whether a defined theme META tag is present and set to indicate that a themed appearance is not desired in the web page;

and

if the theme META tag is present and indicates that themes are not desired, rendering the requested control utilizing a standard look that is not themed by the appearance manager.

18. A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 11.

19. A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating environment, the computer system operable to perform the steps recited in claim 11.

A2 20. A method of rendering a graphical component of a web page on the display of a computer, the computer having an appearance manager adapted to render a graphical component upon receiving a request for the graphical component, comprising:

requesting, by the web page, a graphical component to be rendered on the display;

determining whether the web page has specified cascading style sheet properties;

if cascading style sheet properties are not specified, determining whether a theme style is specified in the web page; and routing the rendering request for the graphical component to the appearance manager if the theme style is specified in the web page, wherein the appearance manager assigns themed appearance characteristics to the graphical component and renders the graphical component on the display.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the graphical component being requested and rendered is a control.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising rendering the requested control utilizing a standard look that is not themed by the appearance manager if the theme style is not selected.

23. The method of claim 20, further comprising rendering the requested control utilizing the cascading style sheet properties if they are specified, rather than routing the request to the appearance manager.

24. A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 20.

25. A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating environment, the computer system operable to perform the steps recited in claim 1.

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